


LEISURE BEFORE AND DURING TEACHING WORK DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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*Vagner Miranda Conceição*¹
Faculdade Pitágoras (Pitágoras)
Belo Horizonte – MG – Brasil
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9778-6190>

*Robert Marra*²
Secretaria de Estado de Educação de Minas Gerais (SEE-MG)
Belo Horizonte – MG – Brasil
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2161-790X>

ABSTRACT: This study investigates the impact of the pandemic on the leisure experiences of university professors. Employing a qualitative approach, data were collected from 589 university professors through online questionnaires, allowing for a profound understanding of the challenges they faced. The results underscore the difficulty of reconciling professional demands with family obligations, affecting leisure activities. The interplay between the domestic environment and daily routines limited opportunities for diverse leisure experiences in various spaces. The analysis revealed the significance of leisure for professors' well-being, emphasizing the need for supportive policies. It is pertinent to reconsider leisure practices and adaptation strategies, particularly in the post-pandemic context.

KEYWORDS: Leisure activities. University professor. COVID-19.

LAZER ANTES E DURANTE O TRABALHO DOCENTE DURANTE A PANDEMIA DE COVID-19

RESUMO: Este estudo investiga o impacto da pandemia nas experiências de lazer de professores universitários. Mediante uma abordagem qualitativa, foram coletados dados de 589 professores universitários por meio de questionários online, permitindo uma compreensão aprofundada dos desafios enfrentados. Os resultados destacam a dificuldade de conciliar as demandas profissionais com as obrigações familiares, afetando as atividades de lazer. A interação entre o ambiente doméstico e as atividades diárias limitou as oportunidades de vivenciar o lazer diversificado em diferentes espaços. A análise revelou a importância do lazer para o bem-estar dos professores, reforçando a necessidade de políticas de apoio. É relevante repensar práticas de lazer e estratégias de adaptação, especialmente diante do contexto pós-pandemia.

¹ Professor Universitário da Faculdade Pitágoras.

² Funcionário da Secretaria de Estado de Educação de Minas Gerais.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Atividades de lazer. Professor universitário. COVID-19.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic was identified in December 2019 in China and declared as a global pandemic in March 2020. Recently, in May 2023, the World Health Organization announced that the pandemic no longer represents a “Public Health Emergency of International Concern”, due to the decreasing trend in deaths from COVID-19, the decline in hospitalizations and admissions to care units. intensive care related to COVID-19 and high levels of population immunity to SARS-CoV-2 (WHO, 2023).

Despite the new status, the virus still deserves attention and care. Mass vaccination and recognition of health care were and still are important preventive measures that can prevent the emergence of new variants and a possible new wave of contamination. It is essential that continuous measures are taken to monitor the evolution of the pandemic and adjust prevention and control strategies according to local needs, especially in the Brazilian context, where the pandemic left marks that will never be erased, as the federal government (2019-2022) acted poorly, compromising several lives.

The pandemic caused significant changes in the way people relate to time and space, as mentioned by Santomauro *et al.* (2021), it was a population shock that affected and still has affected economic, social and health dimensions. As a security measure, at the time, protocol strategies were established, including isolation and social distancing, affecting social dynamics that required proximity between people and presence in different spaces.

Thus, the need to adapt to this new scenario became present, and many activities had to be reconfigured, including leisure activities. These changes brought reflections

on the role of leisure in people's lives and how it could be adapted to different circumstances, but also on the limitations that these circumstances imposed. It is important to consider that the impacts of the pandemic went beyond the temporal dimension, also affecting social, economic relations and cultural practices, and that adaptation to this new scenario was a continuous and constantly evolving process in this context.

During the pandemic, some work activities, as a way of maintaining and continuing work dynamics, were adapted to the remote model. As a result, the home office was consolidated. With this change, the home environment, previously seen as a place for rest and leisure, began to be used for work and fun. As Falcão and Gomes (2020), Matos, Pinheiro and Bahia (2020) and Soutto Mayor, Silva and Lopes (2020) point out, work and leisure times and spaces have been reorganized within the home, and are now intertwined with other domestic activities, providing new insights into the context and what is developed in the domestic environment.

This change in work dynamics had significant impacts on people's lives and the way they related to the domestic environment. On the one hand, the home office has brought the possibility of greater flexibility in working hours and reduced travel, which can be positive for quality of life and reduced stress. On the other hand, the lack of physical separation between work and leisure generated emotional and cognitive overload, as the feeling of disconnection from work became more difficult.

Furthermore, the home office generated inequalities among workers, as not everyone had access to a suitable environment to work from home, technological equipment and resources, or even a private and quiet space. These inequalities may have been accentuated for minority groups, such as women and black people, who may face even more difficulties in reconciling domestic activities with remote work.

Another notable issue was the lack of socialization and face-to-face interaction with co-workers, which affected employees' sense of belonging and motivation. Companies needed to be more attentive to these issues and sought ways – at least, in speeches – to create an organizational culture that valued the well-being and mental health of employees, promoting actions to maintain team integration and engagement, even in a virtual environment.

Science has still been attentive to the products and consequences of this socio-spatial and temporal reconfiguration, in order to understand how it has affected the lives of people who survived that moment. Significant efforts were made to analyze and reflect on the COVID-19 pandemic in different dimensions, relationships and social groups, including the impacts on the daily lives of university professors. This effort is important and necessary, since teaching is the second class most affected by occupational diseases and has been considered a risky profession, given so many demands and lack of psychological support (SANTOS; SILVA; BELMONTE, 2020; CNTE, 2023). The pandemic context generated adverse situations, insecurities, uncertainties and negative emotions, which made it even more important to understand the implications of the pandemic in the lives of these professionals.

Several studies (GHANDOUR *et al.*, 2020; KITA, YASUDA; GHERGHEL, 2022; ELSHAMI *et al.*, 2021; PEDROZO-PUPO; PEDROZO-CORTÉS; CAMPOS-ARIAS, 2020) focused on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health population, which was no different with university professors (NABE-NIELSEN *et al.*, 2022; CARRASCO *et al.*, 2022; GOMES *et al.*, 2021; SANTOS; SILVA; BELMONTE, 2020; MATIAS *et al.*, 2023; FREITAS *et al.*, 2021), highlighting this dimension of health as one of the most affected by the pandemic. To face and minimize these impacts, it was important to seek activities that brought pleasure and well-being

and that could be carried out in free time, even within the limitations imposed by the pandemic (CONCEIÇÃO, 2021).

Leisure is an important activity for the mental and emotional health of university professors, especially in the pandemic context in which work and personal life have become intertwined. However, the pandemic may have affected teachers' time and leisure activities, leading to a possible perception of reduced quality of life and emotional well-being. With the implementation of remote work, many university professors have lost the distinction between work and free time, which has resulted in a reduction in the time available for leisure activities. Additionally, social distancing restrictions have limited the ability to participate in leisure activities outside the home, such as travel, outings, and group sports.

It is important to emphasize that there are several leisure activities that can be carried out indoors, such as reading, games, crafts, cooking and meditative practices. In addition, technology has also been a useful tool for staying connected with friends and family, whether through video calls, online games or social media.

Considering the previous provisions, the purpose of this paper is to analyze how leisure was implemented by university professors, taking into account the temporal and activity restrictions resulting from the pandemic, in order to better understand the impacts of this situation on the lives of these professionals.

Method

This exploratory research study has a qualitative-quantitative approach and involved the participation of 589 university professors. They responded to an online questionnaire with 35 open and closed questions that covered topics such as socioeconomic profile, work demand, time dedicated to leisure and leisure activities

before and during the pandemic. Participants agreed to participate in the research through an "Informed Consent Form", which was presented as the first question in the questionnaire. To be included in the study, participants needed to be Brazilian university professors with at least two years of experience and who had taught remotely during the pandemic.

The questionnaire used in the research was adapted from other sources (RIBEIRO *et al.*, 2020; CONCEIÇÃO, 2018; 2021; STOPPA; ISAYAMA, 2017) and underwent a pilot test before being shared through social networks (such as Facebook and WhatsApp) side of the Ministry of Education website. Furthermore, the questionnaire was replicated to other university professors using the "Virtual Snowball" method (COSTA, 2018) during the months of April to July 2021. The sample obtained was for convenience and does not necessarily represent the population.

The information obtained was structured using the Microsoft Excel tool. The analysis of open questions was carried out using the technique of Categorical Content Analysis (BARDIN, 2016), while descriptive statistics (CALLEGARI-JACQUES, 2004) was used to interpret closed questions.

Results and Discussion

Socioeconomic Profile

Table 1 presents information about the socioeconomic profile of the teachers participating in the research. Of the 589 respondents, 60.27% are women, 38.54% are between 35 and 44 years old, 75.38% self-declared as white, 65.19% are in a stable relationship, 77.42% have a Ph.D., 28.5% are from the health sector, 35.8% are from Minas Gerais and 96.1% live in urban areas.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of socioeconomic profile

Data	Items	N	%
Gender	Male	234	39.73
	Female	355	60.27
Age Range (average of 45.7 years old)	25 to 34 years old	68	11.54
	35 to 44 years old	227	38.54
	45 to 54 years old	169	28.69
	55 to 64 years old	100	16.98
	65 years or older	25	4.24
Color	Yellow	5	0.85
	White	444	75.38
	Indigenous	2	0.34
	Brown	120	20.37
	Black	18	3.05
Marital Status	Married / Steady Union	384	65.19
	Separated / Divorced	77	13.07
	Single	124	21.05
	Widower	4	0.68
Maximum Degree	Ph.D.	456	77.4
	Master's Degree	112	19.0
	Specialization	21	3.56
Great area CAPES (undergraduate)	Health Sciences	168	28.5
	Applied Social Sciences	118	20.0
	Exact and Earth Sciences	77	13.1
	Engineering	55	9.3
	Linguistics, Literature and Arts	53	9.0
	Agricultural Sciences	44	7.5
	Human Sciences	39	6.6
	Biological Sciences	37	6.3
Federation Unit	Minas Gerais	211	35.82
	Pernambuco	72	12.22
	Distrito Federal	70	11.88
	Santa Catarina	50	8.49

	Mato Grosso	30	5.09
	Rio Grande do Sul	53	9.0
	Ceará	13	2.21
	Goiás	13	2.21
	Paraná	15	2.54
	Mato Grosso do Sul	10	1.7
	Tocantins	8	1.36
	São Paulo	7	1.18
	Bahia	6	1.01
	Rio de Janeiro	8	1.36
	Amazonas	5	0.85
	Paraíba	4	0.68
	Rio Grande do Norte	4	0.68
	Espírito Santo	4	0.68
	Piauí	2	0.34
	Roraima	1	0.17
	Rondônia	1	0.17
	Amapá	1	0.17
	Maranhão	1	0.17
Municipal typology	Urban	566	96.10
	Rural	23	3.90

Source: prepared by the authors.

Data on housing, institution of work and family income of teachers are available in Table 2. It is observed that 54.16% of teachers live in an apartment, while 58.2% share a house with two or three other people. Furthermore, 76.2% work exclusively in federal institutions and have an average of 21.1 years of professional experience. As for family income, 26.5% of teachers declared that they earned between 10 and 15 minimum wages.

Table 2: Frequency/percentage on housing, institution of activity and family income

Data	Items	N	%
Type of housing	Apartment	319	54.16
	House	219	37.18
	House or apartment in condominium	42	7.13
	Country House / Ranch / Farm	9	1.53
Shared housing	Living alone.	83	14.09
	Between 2 and 3 people.	343	58.23
	Between 4 and 5 people.	155	26.32
	6 people or more.	8	1.36
Institution of work	Federal	449	76.23
	Private	80	13.58
	State	44	7.47
	Federal, private	9	1.53
	State, private	5	0.85
	State, federal	1	0.17
	Local, state	1	0.17
Family income in minimum wage (SM)	Up to 1 SM	1	0.17
	Between 1 and 3 SM	11	1.87
	Between 3 and 5 SM	28	4.75
	Between 5 and 7 SM	47	7.98
	Between 7 and 10 SM	139	23.6
	Between 10 and 15 SM	156	26.48
	Between 15 and 20 SM	118	20.03
	Above 20 SM	74	12.56
	Did not inform	15	2.54

Source: prepared by the authors.

Table 3, it can be seen that 32.1% of professors are involved with four pillars of action in higher education, while 37.8% are involved with three pillars. Furthermore, Table 4 shows that 81.3% of teachers reported being involved in research activities in addition to teaching.

Table 3: Frequency/percentage of involvement in the pillars of higher education

Activity	N	%
Education	64	10.87
Education, extension	9	1.52
Education, management	21	3.56
Education, research	83	14.09
Education, extension, management	13	2.20
Education, research, management	55	9.35
Education, research, extension	155	26.32
Education, research, extension, management	189	32.09
Total	589	100

Source: Prepared by the authors. N = frequency

Table 4: Frequency and percentage by pillar of higher education

Activity	N	%
Education	589	100.0
Research	482	82.34
Extension	366	62.14
Management	277	47.09

Source: Prepared by the authors. N = frequency.

In a previous study (CONCEIÇÃO, 2021), it was highlighted that, unlike other professions, higher education teachers engage in various activities related to the pillars of this level of education, in addition to their tasks in the classroom – especially in federal institutions, which in this study represent 76.2%. These pillars are important to complement training and improve the quality of teaching, and are interconnected in order to relate theory and academic scientific practice. Whether in research, extension or management, all activities require time, structuring, organization, planning, continuous evaluation and delivery of products related to the results of the actions developed. Therefore, the work of a university professor is complex and demands great time and resource management skills, in order to guarantee success in all these areas.

The data presented in TABLE 5 indicates that the majority of teachers (75.55%) noticed an increase in work demand during the pandemic. On the other hand, for 16.6% of teachers, demand remained the same as before the pandemic. The average weekly workload declared by teachers was 39.3 hours under contract (before the pandemic) and 40.6 hours in actual practice (during the pandemic).

Table 5: Frequency/percentage of the perception of work demand during the pandemic

Answer	N	%
The demand for work increased.	445	75.55
The demand for work is the same.	98	16.64
The demand for work decreased.	46	7.81
Total	589	100

Source: Prepared by the authors. N = frequency

Several factors or challenges (AKOUR *et al.*, 2020; CAMACHO, 2020; CHEN *et al.*, 2020; CHOATE *et al.*, 2021; CURRIE *et al.*, 2020; GAUTAM; SHARMA, 2020; MAJOWICZ, 2020; MULLA *et al.*, 2020; MUÑOZ-LEIJA *et al.*, 2020) can explain the perception of teachers of increased work demand during the pandemic. These factors include the need to quickly restructure and adapt in-person teaching to the distance-learning model, urgent adjustments to adapt to new platforms, the constant concern with maintaining the quality of remote teaching, managing distractions and technological setbacks, the need to plan classes attractive to students and deal with constant family and domestic demands. Additionally, many teachers shared space at home with other adults who worked and children who studied, which increased the challenges of maintaining concentration and productivity. Furthermore, uncertainty and concerns related to health and professional status also contributed to the perception of an increase in teachers' workload.

Authors such as Choate *et al.* (2021) and Currie *et al.* (2020) point out that the rapid transition to remote teaching during the pandemic, together with the need for

intensive and specific training, as well as the differences between face-to-face and online classes, contributed to the perception of increased workload. This transition, combined with daily technological problems, was exhausting for university professors (CHEN *et al.*, 2020), negatively affecting their physical and mental well-being (CURRIE *et al.*, 2020). It is important to remember that the teaching profession ranks second in terms of occupational diseases (SANTOS; SILVA; BELMONTE, 2020) and that work overload and multitasking can lead to the development of stress, depression and anxiety among teachers (GAUTAM; SHARMA, 2020; RIBEIRO *et al.*, 2020; SANTOMAURO *et al.*, 2021), mental disorders that had an increased prevalence during the COVID-19 pandemic (SANTOMAURO *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to the general health of these professionals.

All of these issues highlight the importance of providing university professors with the support they need to face these challenges and ensure they can carry out their roles effectively and healthily, whether pandemic or not. It is essential to provide training and support in technology and remote teaching methodologies, or not, as well as offering emotional and psychological support to university professors. Universities and higher education institutions must work collaboratively with teachers to identify and address issues that contribute to workload, thus ensuring a healthy and productive work environment for everyone involved in the educational process.

In addition to technological difficulties, there was a reduction in contact between peers and between students and teachers, including camera audio being turned off (CURRIE *et al.*, 2020; CHOATE *et al.*, 2021). However, Mulla *et al.* (2020) highlight that, even at a distance, connectivity was a reality in the globalized world and, in a pandemic context, interactions and social and professional networks - virtual, remote and online - should not be underestimated. This constant connection helped students and

teachers not to feel isolated (CHOATE *et al.*, 2021), which was important in facing the pandemic.

Therefore, it is important that measures are implemented to help teachers deal with these challenges, including offering specific training for adequate access to technology and creating policies that take teachers' mental health into account. Furthermore, it is essential that strategies are developed that enable the digital inclusion of all students, ensuring that no one is abandoned in the learning process.

According to Currie *et al.* (2020), some teachers reported that working from home increased their productivity and decreased fatigue, especially those who live far from the workplace, which also resulted in an improvement in health and physical and mental well-being due to reduced travel time in traffic. However, for other teachers, there was a decrease in productivity and an increase in fatigue, negatively affecting health and well-being due to the constant feeling of filling all available time with work tasks. Remote work can present both advantages and disadvantages for teachers, affecting their productivity, health, and well-being in a variety of ways. It is important that educational institutions consider these factors when deciding on teaching - in person or remotely - and offer support to teachers to face challenges in using technological tools.

Additionally, it is important to highlight that Artificial Intelligence has shown notable progress in recent years, more significantly in recent months, and tools such as ChatGPT have emerged as a promising alternative to enhance, optimize and qualify the work of teaching staff, as long as the human behind the commands knows how to leverage the tool (ALVES; FARIA, 2023). When used appropriately, these tools can significantly reduce the time needed to carry out activities that would otherwise take days or hours to complete. Therefore, it is essential to consider the potential of these

technological tools as a strategy to personalize teachers' work, increasing their productivity and efficiency in the classroom.

In the domestic environment, all personal needs were intertwined with professional activities. The boundary between work, leisure and all other dimensions of life at home became “blurred”, generating the constant feeling that there was always something to be done (SOUTTO MAYOR; SILVA; LOPES, 2020). Paradoxically, the same technological advance that allows you to search for leisure options remotely also contributed to, during the pandemic, mixing and confusing the relationship between leisure and work (GOMES, 2014).

It is important to emphasize that the confusion between the dimensions of life at home can negatively affect the health and well-being of teachers, resulting in stress, anxiety and emotional exhaustion (GAUTAM; SHARMA, 2020; RIBEIRO *et al.*, 2020; SANTOMAURO *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, it is essential that teachers establish clear boundaries between work and personal life, defining specific times for each activity and creating an adequate and comfortable working environment at home (CURRIE *et al.*, 2020; CHOATE *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, carrying out physical activities, moments of leisure and rest, and contact with friends and family are also important for the well-being and mental health of teachers (SOUTTO MAYOR; SILVA; LOPES, 2020).

According to Table 7, around 9.3% of teachers reported working more than 12 hours a day during the pandemic. For 46% of the participants, the daily workload varied between 8 and 12 hours.

Table 7: Frequency and percentage of daily work during the pandemic

Activity	N	%
Up to 6 hours	110	18.67
Between 6 and 8 hours	153	25.98
Between 8 and 12	271	46.01

hours		
Over 12 hours	55	9.34
Total	589	100

Source: Prepared by the authors. N = frequency

Increased workload and excessive work can lead to job satisfaction problems for university professors, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal fulfillment (CHEN *et al.*, 2020). It is essential to emphasize that professional satisfaction is a crucial aspect for maintaining teachers' enthusiasm amid the challenges posed by the pandemic, contributing to a high-quality educational process and meeting students' needs effectively. To this end, Chen *et al.* (2020) recommend attention and care when organizing and distributing the workload over time, as the increase in repetitive and complex tasks can deplete the teacher's energy and affect their professional satisfaction, whether in the pandemic context or not.

Furthermore, it is important to remember that university professors have a great responsibility for the academic and professional development of students, and, to achieve this, they need to be healthy and satisfied in their work. Therefore, it is essential that educational institutions are also responsible for offering an adequate working environment, emotional and psychological support to teachers, and opportunities for professional development, so that they can continue to perform their role effectively and satisfactorily, even in times of pandemic.

According to Currie *et al.* (2020), some teachers reported that including free and distraction time in the morning or late at night helped to deal with increased work demands and fatigue resulting from the pandemic context. Gautam and Sharma (2020) state that it was important to relax and have a deep sleep to avoid the negative consequences of this period. Remote work has allowed this flexibility, but promoting teachers' health must be a priority in institutional programs that aim to balance work and

health. Furthermore, healthcare, especially in a pandemic context, should not be seen as an option, but as a necessary and urgent strategy (SANTOMAURO *et al.*, 2021).

Importantly, promoting teachers' mental health is also key to ensuring emotional and psychological well-being during this challenging period. The pandemic can increase anxiety, stress and other mental health problems, and the lack of social contact can worsen these problems (CHOATE *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, it is important that institutions offer emotional and psychological support to university professors, whether through counseling services or support groups, for example. Teachers can also take measures to promote their own mental health, such as setting aside time for activities that provide relaxation and pleasure, such as physical exercise or hobbies, and maintaining a healthy routine, with regular sleep schedules and a balanced diet (SOUTTO MAYOR; SILVA; LOPES, 2020).

The data indicate that, in addition to the activities carried out at the higher education institution, around 18.7% of teachers also carry out other professional activities not related to the academic context. The activities reported included advocacy, working in clinics and offices, various management positions, personal coaching, among others. The average weekly hours dedicated to these activities is 16.6 hours.

The accumulation of professional activities can harm the time dedicated to other dimensions of life, especially leisure. Furthermore, double working hours can be motivated both by professional achievement and by the need to supplement income. However, each new work obligation added steals part of the time that would be allocated to leisure. This uncertain context, combined with concerns about employment and salary in academia, leads to a situation in which there is a need to supplement income to meet social and family consumption demands (GAUTAM; SHARMA, 2020).

It is worth noting that, during this process, non-work time is also compromised by the stages of preparation, organization, engagement and reflection related to work activities.

Therefore, work overload can generate negative consequences for the health and well-being of workers, such as fatigue and even burnout. Not to mention that the lack of time for leisure and rest activities can negatively affect individuals' personal, family and social lives, contributing to a decrease in quality of life.

To deal with this situation, it is important to strike a balance between professional and personal activities, prioritizing time for leisure and rest. It is also essential that companies and institutions value the quality of life of their employees, offering flexible schedules, well-being programs and opportunities for personal and professional development. Furthermore, it is important to reflect on work culture and the need for excessive working hours, seeking alternatives for a more balanced distribution of time and a greater appreciation of non-work activities.

In the pandemic, time shrank; and with isolation, leisure retracted...

During the pandemic, there was a reduction in time dedicated to leisure among university professors (as shown in TABLE 8), with 72.3% of them reporting this decrease. Meanwhile, only 8.3% reported having increased leisure time and 3.6% reported having no leisure time before and during the pandemic.

Table 8: Frequency/percentage of perception about leisure time during the pandemic

Activity	N	%
There is no time for leisure – before and during the pandemic.	21	3.6
Leisure time has increased.	49	8.3
Leisure time has decreased.	426	72.3
Leisure time is the same.	93	15.8
Total	589	100

Source: Prepared by the authors. N = frequency

In the study carried out with teachers, they were asked to choose more than one option from a list of leisure activities before and during the pandemic (TABLE 9). After analysis, the categories were organized based on cultural leisure interests (DUMAZEDIER, 1980; CAMARGO, 1986; SCHWARTZ, 2003).

Table 9: Frequency and percentage of difference in activities and leisure categories before and during the pandemic

Category	Activity	Before	During	%
Artistic interest	Watching movies at the cinema	389	3	↓99.2
	Watch TV, series, movies and the like at home via streaming	326	388	↑19.0
	Listening to music	317	271	↓14.5
	Watching artistic performances in person	289	2	↓99.3
	Watching TV, series, films and the like at home on paid-TV	230	227	↓1.3
	Watching music videos on YouTube and similar	143	168	↑17.5
	Watch TV, series, films and the like at home on open TV	85	99	↑16.5
	Playing a musical instrument	72	55	↓23.6
	Watching online artistic performances	47	115	↑144.7
	Dancing	2	0	↓100
	Singing in a music group	1	0	↓100
	Writing literature	1	1	=
Total artistic interest		1892	1329	↓29.8
Physical interest	Practicing physical-sports activities in public spaces	299	131	↓56.2
	Practicing physical-sports activities in private spaces	245	66	↓73.1
	Watching sport on paid-TV	102	129	↑26.5
	Watching sport in stadiums, sports centers or clubs	71	7	↓90.1
	Watch sport on open TV	57	77	↑35.1
	Practicing physical and/or sports activities at home	56	228	↑307.1
	Watching sports programs to stay informed	50	42	↓16.0
	Taking trails and walking outdoors	2	0	↓100
	Skydiving	1	1	=
Total Physical Interest		883	681	↓22.3
Manual interest	Cooking for pleasure	214	197	↓7.9
	Taking care of pets for pleasure	146	155	↑6.2
	Taking care of the garden or vegetable garden for pleasure	135	170	↑25.9
	Carrying out other hobbies related to manual services, crafts, assembling tools, etc.	57	59	↑3.5
	Making handcrafts at home or other spaces	40	40	=
	Performing some type of fine arts	23	17	↓26.1
	Sewing	1	0	↓100
	Maintaining old video games and electronics	1	1	=
Total Manual Interest		617	639	↑3.6
Virtual Interest	Browsing the Internet	319	272	↓14.7
	Using social media to update myself on different topics	217	221	↑1.8
	Playing videogames, computer, cell phones and similar	87	83	↓4.6
	Playing online games	42	72	↑71.4
Total Virtual Interest		655	648	↓1.1
Social	Meeting friends and/or family outside the home	477	29	↓93.9

Interest	Going to bars and restaurants	453	23	↓94.9
	Visiting friends and/or family in their homes	432	61	↓85.9
	Receiving friends and/or family at my home	422	57	↓86.5
	Using social networks to chat (<i>WhatsApp, Messenger</i> etc.)	351	343	↓2.3
	Visiting shopping centers	326	16	↓95.1
	Attending parties	322	2	↓99.4
	Dating	143	93	↓35.0
	Taking walks outdoors with pets	121	69	↓43.0
	Playing board games with friends or family	110	58	↓47.3
	Using social media to meet people (Tinder, Happn, etc.)	31	22	↓29.0
	Participating in games and/or games in the yard or on the street	30	9	↓70.0
	Going to the beach	1	0	↓100.0
	Spending time with family	0	2	↑
	Having online meetings with friends and family	0	1	↑
Total Social Interest	3227	787	↓75.6	
Intellectual Interest	Reading (books, newspapers, magazines, etc.) on topics not related to my work and/or field of study	296	269	↓9.1
	Visiting museums or other cultural spaces in person	278	0	↓100.0
	Taking face-to-face courses not related to my work and/or field of study	75	28	↓62.7
	Taking online courses unrelated to my work and/or field of study	33	94	↑184.9
	Visiting museums, cultural centers or other cultural spaces online	27	47	↑74.1
	Collecting stamps	1	1	=
	Reading comics	1	0	↓100.0
	Working on puzzles	1	0	↓100.0
Total Intellectual Interest	720	439	↓39.0	
Tourist interest	Traveling on weekends or holidays	392	20	↓94.9
	Taking excursions and/or short trips	262	13	↓95.0
	Taking long trips/longer periods	3	0	↓100.0
	Total Tourist Interest	657	33	↓95.0
Idle activities	Idleness (doing nothing, resting, contemplation) at home	281	332	↑18.1
	Idleness (doing nothing, resting, contemplation) outside the home	167	31	↓81.4
	Fishing	1	1	=
	Total Idleness Activity	449	364	↓18.9
Other activities	Volunteering at an NGO	1	-	↓100
	Staying at home	-	1	↑
	Same as before	-	1	↑
	Yoga and meditation	-	1	↑
	Total Other Activities	1	3	↑300
GRAND TOTAL		9005	4767	↓47.1

Source: prepared by the authors.

Two categories were created based on responses that did not mention leisure activities, but rather “Limitations and restrictions for the practice of leisure” and

“Instrumental activities”, which, despite being carried out in the time available, cannot be considered as leisure, as they are related to training and professional performance. According to TABLE 10, the category “Limitations and restrictions for leisure activities” had a 350% increase in responses during the pandemic, compared to the previous period. Meanwhile, the “Instrumental activities” category showed a small reduction of 1.7%.

Table 10: Frequency/percentage of difference in instrumental activities and leisure limitations and restrictions before and during the pandemic

Category	Activity	Before	During	%
Instrumental activities	Reading about topics related to work and/or area of study	201	218	↑8.5
	Taking face-to-face courses related to work and/or area of study	153	17	↓88.9
	Taking online courses related to work and/or area of study	68	180	↑164.7
	Total Instrumental activities	422	415	↓1.7
Limitation and/or restriction on leisure	Did not have time for leisure, as the work took a lot of time.	17	81	↑376.5
	There was no leisure time, as caring for family members took a lot of time.	9	39	↑333.3
	Did not have time for leisure, as domestic work took a lot of time.	9	60	↑566.7
	Difficult to balance the time available, but managed to do it.	3	0	↓100
	Did not have time for leisure.	1	0	↓100
	High cost of living for leisure activities.	1	0	↓100
	Total Limitation and/or restriction on leisure	40	180	↑350%

Source: prepared by the authors.

The COVID-19 pandemic demanded new forms of organization so that we could resist and survive in a healthy way. As a result of restrictions on crowding and movement, there was a significant decrease in tourist (travel), artistic (visits to cinemas and various shows) and social activities (meetings in different places and receiving visitors), with the social category being the only one to present a decrease in all their possibilities for leisure. The same reduction was noticed in physical interests (carrying out physical activities outside the home) and intellectual interests (training and face-to-face courses), as well as in leisure time outside the home.

Due to the need to prevent the spread of the virus, social interactions outside the home have been reduced during the pandemic. Leisure that involves meeting between people, a human need that takes place in a social time and space (GOMES, 2014), needed to be rethought and adapted to other forms and experiences, showing resilience and persistence in the face of the pandemic context. According to Akour *et al.* (2020), activities that involve family participation and social interactions during this period are seen as coping mechanisms to deal with negative emotions resulting from social isolation, which can affect mental health.

During the pandemic, restrictions on activities outside the home gave rise to new forms of leisure experiences, such as online shows, which allow contact and communication between the public and artists. Several digital platforms were used to reinvent the home and meet the need for leisure, such as musical and theatrical lives, series and films via streaming and online meetings through tools such as Zoom and Meet (CLEMENTE; STOPPA, 2020).

In fact, the pandemic brought significant changes to the way people interact and have fun, making it necessary to adapt leisure activities to the virtual and/or individual environment. Digital technologies have become allies in carrying out leisure activities, enabling online games, theatrical shows, virtual art and museum exhibitions, video conferences with friends and family, among other activities. Digital platforms also made it possible to hold virtual meetings with friends and family, allowing the maintenance of social and emotional relationships in a period of social isolation. Video conferencing tools, such as Zoom and Meet, have become popular for holding work meetings, virtual classes and social gatherings – once again intertwining leisure and work space.

In addition, many people began to explore new forms of leisure at home, such as practicing physical activities at home, reading, cooking, gardening, crafts and other

activities that can be carried out individually or as a family, with the aim of maintaining health. active and healthy body and mind.

It is important to value the new forms of leisure that emerged during the pandemic and continue to explore new activities and forms of social interaction, even after restrictions on activities outside the home are lifted. The conscious and balanced use of digital technologies can contribute to promoting mental and emotional health, allowing people to continue to enjoy moments of leisure and relaxation even in a period of uncertainty and change.

Social interaction is a fundamental aspect for the well-being and mental health of individuals, and the absence of these interactions can generate significant impacts. Therefore, it is important to value and encourage activities that promote social interaction, even virtually, during the period of social isolation, or not.

Authors such as Castilho, Ribeiro and Ungheri (2020), Clemente and Stoppa (2020), Montenegro, Queiroz and Dias (2020) and Pessoa, Moura and Farias (2021) observed a trend towards the virtualization of leisure in the context of the pandemic. However, among teachers, this process was not as expressive. In fact, with the exception of online games, which increased during the pandemic, all other activities in this category were reduced. It is also inferred that the combination of increased demand and working time and this combination of work activities carried out on the computer may influence this distancing from virtual leisure activities, as well as the possibilities of affinities and interest, which are related to determinants of subjectivity and attitude present in the implementation of leisure.

This can also be explained by the fact that most teachers had to quickly adapt to remote teaching and began to dedicate a lot of time to work-related activities, such as preparing online classes, correcting work and serving students. Additionally, many

professors report that they missed the human contact and social interactions that were previously possible in the academic environment.

Leisure is fundamental for maintaining quality of life and health, in all its dimensions, and teachers must look for ways to incorporate leisure activities into their routines, even if virtual. Practicing physical activities at home, reading books, participating in virtual discussion groups on topics of interest, playing online games in groups, are examples of activities that can help reduce stress and anxiety, common disorders among this social group, and improve the quality of life of teachers.

There was a general reduction in physical interests during the pandemic, however physical activity in the context of leisure began to be carried out indoors with a significant increase of 338.7%, going from 49 to 215 engagements in this activity. Practicing regular physical activity brings several benefits to physical and mental health, both as a way of coping and to maintain good health. It is important to highlight that a sedentary lifestyle is associated with health risks, such as overweight and obesity, in addition to being a risk factor for several diseases. Performing physical activity indoors was also a safe way to exercise and avoid contact and spread of the COVID-19 virus (MATTOS et al., 2020).

It is essential to highlight the importance of professional guidance for carrying out physical activity, as improper practice can cause problems for the practitioner. The practice of physical activities must be carried out gradually and appropriately to the physical conditions of each person, taking into account their limitations and health history. Therefore, it is recommended that people seek guidance from physical education professionals to create a personalized and safe exercise program. It is also worth mentioning that physical activity does not necessarily need to be intense or involve sophisticated equipment to be beneficial. Walking, stretching, yoga and other

simple practices can bring excellent results for physical and mental health. It is noteworthy that carrying out physical activities in the context of leisure helps maintain motivation and willingness to face everyday challenges, especially during the turbulent period of pandemic emergency.

Training courses that were previously in person were carried out remotely, which represents a reversal in the category of intellectual leisure interests. Although this change has not affected the category in its essence, it presents itself in a different way, demonstrating the ability to adapt and the search to fulfill leisure needs. Furthermore, the virtual environment reduced or eliminated some factors that could be obstacles to engaging in these courses, such as time logistics, travel, physical presence and distance, making them more accessible (CONCEIÇÃO, 2021).

The move to the virtual environment has also impacted the development of socio-emotional and interpersonal skills. While remote learning allows for greater flexibility and accessibility, the lack of in-person interaction can negatively impact the development of these skills. Therefore, it is important to consider new ways to promote interaction and collaboration in virtual learning environments.

On the other hand, taking training courses remotely can be a great opportunity to connect with people from different parts of the world and share knowledge and experiences. Communication and collaboration technologies enable the creation of a global learning community, which can bring significant benefits to personal and professional development.

It is important to highlight that adapting to new ways of learning and working also requires investment in infrastructure and technology, as well as in digital skills and socio-emotional skills. The pandemic has brought to light the need for digital

transformation and more innovative and inclusive education, which can meet the demands and challenges of the contemporary world.

Despite having given new meaning to leisure activities during the pandemic, there was a significant reduction of almost half (47.7%) of these activities. Furthermore, the rapid adaptations and adjustments at the beginning of the pandemic, along with maintaining online classes, was a pedagogical challenge (AKOUR et al., 2020). This may have resulted in an increase in time dedicated to work and consequently, leaving less time for other areas of life, including leisure (LOSEKANN; MOURÃO, 2020; RIBEIRO *et al.*, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in several social distancing measures, which have had a significant impact on different aspects of people's lives, including leisure and education. Although many individuals have tried to adapt and find new ways to have fun and relax, the sharp reduction in leisure activities suggests that this adaptation has not been easy. The rapid transition to online education has also posed significant challenges for students and teachers, who have had to quickly adapt to new technologies and teaching methodologies. Such challenges may have resulted in an increase in time dedicated to work and studies, leaving little free time for other activities, including leisure.

It is important to highlight that the lack of leisure activities can have negative consequences on the mental and physical health of individuals, generating greater stress and anxiety. Therefore, it is crucial to look for safe and creative ways to have fun and relax, such as exercising at home, playing online games with friends, or even learning a new skill or hobby.

In addition to concerns about safety protocols, the time available for leisure was significantly reduced (73.6%), while the “Limitation/restriction for leisure” increased by

452%. The pandemic brought a new perception of time, especially because all daily activities are interconnected in a common space at home, demanding more time, energy and organization on the part of university professors to carry out academic activities and take care of household tasks, as well as demands family and cleaning.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought numerous challenges to people's daily lives, including limiting leisure activities. The significant reduction in time available for leisure is a direct reflection of the security measures implemented to contain the spread of the virus.

It is important that universities and educational institutions promote a culture of flexibility and adaptation, offering adequate resources and support so that teachers can better manage their time and balance professional and personal demands. This includes offering training and qualifications for the use of educational technologies and more flexible and accessible teaching methodologies.

Final Considerations

During the pandemic, university professors faced difficulties balancing work and family obligations, compromising their leisure experiences. The pandemic intensified the connection between daily activities and domestic space, affecting leisure in different places. The lack of social interaction has reduced leisure activities. Although this research focused on university professors during the pandemic, its reflections can guide future studies on post-pandemic leisure.

It is suggested to investigate teachers' adaptation strategies, the relationship between pandemic limitations and new forms of leisure, and post-pandemic changes in leisure practices. Such studies can inform well-being policies for university professors and expand understanding of the relationships between leisure and work. New studies

can enrich the understanding of contemporary leisure and promote inclusive and meaningful practices.

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Endereço dos Autores:

Vagner Miranda Conceição
Endereço eletrônico: eefvagner@hotmail.com

Robert Marra
Endereço eletrônico: robert-marra@hotmail.com